

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1        1. A method for controlling the transmission of control information to an  
2 input device in an entertainment system, comprising:  
3            receiving programming data associated with a broadcast channel  
4            displaying a show associated with the channel;  
5            configuring an input device to operate in a first mode that suspends  
6 transmission of input control information entered via said input device, to the  
7 entertainment system.

1        2. The method of claim 1, further comprising displaying a message  
2 indicating that said input device is configured to operate in the first mode.

1        3. The method of claim 2, wherein said message is displayed for a  
2 predetermined period of time.

1        4. The method of claim 1, wherein configuring the input device  
2 comprises:  
3            selecting a key on said input device;  
4            prompting the user to enter a password;

5           displaying a menu having at least one option that facilitates configuration of  
6    said input device to operate in said first mode that suspends transmission of input  
7    control information to the entertainment system;  
8           selecting said at least one option.

1           5.       The method of claim 4, further comprising displaying a status key  
2    indicating that said first mode is selected.

1           6.       The method of Claim 1, further comprising receiving an instruction to  
2    configure the input device to operate in a second mode that facilitates unlimited  
3    transmission of input control information to the entertainment system.

1           7.       The method of claim 6, wherein receiving said instruction to configure  
2    the input device to operate in the second mode comprises:  
3           selecting said key on said input device;  
4           prompting the user to enter the password;  
5           confirming the validity of said password;  
6           displaying a menu having an option that facilitates configuration of said  
7    input device to operate in said second mode that facilitates unlimited transmission  
8    of input control information to the entertainment system;  
9           selecting said option that facilitates configuration of said input device to  
10   operate in said second mode.

1           8.     The method of claim 7, further comprising displaying a message  
2 indicating that said input device is configured to operate in the second mode.

1           9.     The method of claim 1, further comprising terminating transmission of  
2 all input control information to said entertainment system entered via said input  
3 device.

4           10.    The method of claim 9, further comprising reactivating transmission of  
5 all input control information to said entertainment system entered via said input  
6 device upon selection of a dedicated key on said input device.

1           11.    An entertainment system comprising:  
2           a display monitor; and  
3           a broadcast receiver coupled to the display monitor, the broadcast receiver  
4 including

5           a front-end unit capable of receiving programming data associated  
6 with a show broadcast for viewing on the display monitor,

7           a memory, and

8           a central processing unit coupled to the memory, the central processing  
9 unit coupled to receive programming data associated with a broadcast channel,  
10 the central processing unit to execute software to display a show associated with  
11 the channel, said central processing unit to execute software to configure an

12 input device to operate in a first mode that suspends transmission of input  
13 control information entered via said input device, to the entertainment system.

1           12. The entertainment system of claim 11, wherein the central processing  
2 unit further executes software to display a message indicating that said input device  
3 is configured to operate in the first mode.

1           13. The entertainment system of claim 12, wherein said message is  
2 displayed for a predetermined period of time.

1           14. The entertainment system of claim 11, wherein configuring the input  
2 device comprises:

3           selecting a key on said input device;  
4           prompting the user to enter a password;  
5           displaying a menu having at least one option that facilitates configuration of  
6 said input device to operate in said first mode that suspends transmission of input  
7 control information to the entertainment system;  
8           selecting said at least one option.

1           15. The entertainment system of claim 14, wherein said central processing  
2 unit further executes software to display a status key indicating that said first mode  
3 is selected.

1        16. The entertainment system of claim 11, wherein said central processing  
2 unit further receives an instruction to configure the input device to operate in a  
3 second mode that facilitates unlimited transmission of input control information to  
4 the entertainment system.

1        17. The entertainment system of claim 16, wherein receiving said  
2 instruction to configure the input device to operate in the second mode comprises:  
3            selecting said key on said input device;  
4            prompting the user to enter the password;  
5            confirming the validity of said password;  
6            displaying a menu having an option that facilitates configuration of said  
7 input device to operate in said second mode that facilitates unlimited transmission  
8 of input control information to the entertainment system;  
9            selecting said option that facilitates configuration of said input device to  
10 operate in said second mode.

1        18. The entertainment system of claim 17, wherein said central processing  
2 unit further displays a message indicating that said input device is configured to  
3 operate in the second mode.

1           19. The entertainment system of claim 11, wherein transmission of all  
2 input control information to said entertainment system entered via said input device  
3 is terminated.

1           20. The entertainment system of claim 19, wherein transmission of all  
2 input control information to said entertainment system entered via said input device  
3 is reactivated, upon selection of a dedicated key on said input device.